

SIAM

GUIDE BOOK

*Bangkok, Bang Pa-In, Ayudhya
and Lophuri*



GUIDE BOOK
TO THE
Chief Monuments
OF
BANGKOK, BANG PA-IN, AYUDHYA
AND LOPBURI
WITH AN

Introduction on Siamese History and Religion.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

Siam as a political unit is a recent fact in the history of the Indochinese Peninsula, and the history of the Siamese nation begins with the foundation of the Kingdom of Sukhodaya (a ruined city on the upper Menam Yom, one of the rivers forming the Menam Chao Phya), where, towards the middle of the XIIIth. Century, the Thai, freeing themselves from Khmer suzerainty, founded their first independent principality in the Menam basin.

What is now Siamese territory was in remote times inhabited by Lawas and other savage tribes belonging most probably to the Mon-Khmer family. Some remnants of the Lawa tribes are still in existence in various parts of Siam, and their name can still be traced in the name of *Lavapurī* (Lopburi), which is one of the most ancient sites of Siam. Towards the VIIth. Century of the Christian era, three states shared the territory now occupied by Siam; to the East, the basins of the Mun and Mekhong were occupied by the Khmers; to the West, the lower Menam and the Northern part of the Malay Peninsula formed the Kingdom of Dvāravatī, probably inhabited by Mons who had settlements in the Northern Menam valley as far as Lampūn; and to the South, the dependencies or settlements of the Malay Kingdom of S'rīvijaya (Palembang, in Sumatra) occupied both sides of the Malay Peninsula.

The history of Ayudhyā (1350-1767) can be divided into five periods.

The first period, corresponding to the reign of Rāmādhipati I (1350-1369) and of his four immediate successors, is that of the establishment of Ayudhyā's suzerainty over the neighbouring Thai principalities.

During the second period (1409-1533) the Kingdom of Ayudhyā extended its territory by way of conquest or annexation, especially in the North under King Paramatrailokanāth (1448-1488).

The third period (1533-1605) is that of the great wars, caused by the fact that the conquests of the previous period had brought the kingdom of Ayudhyā into contact with powerful neighbours, especially with the Burmese. The great hero of that period is Phra Naresvara Mahārāja (1590-1605 A. D.), who liberated the country from the Burmese, who had invaded it during the previous reigns, and gave to Siam the most extensive limits she ever reached. The next period covers practically the whole 17th. century, and sees Siam entering into relations with foreign nations.

Phra Chao Prāsād Thong (1630-1655 A. D.) founded a new dynasty under which the foreigners and particularly the Europeans began to trade with Siam and to establish factories in the country.

The most famous of all the kings of the dynasty is Phra Nārāyana Mahārāja (1656-1688 A. D.), who took as councillor the Greek, Constantin Phaulkon, and exchanged embassies with the King of France, Louis XIV.

The fifth and last period shows the decline of the Kingdom of Ayudhyā.

In 1763 A. D. the Burmese, who had been almost continually at war with Siam since the XVth. century, invaded the country once more, and after four years' contest, captured Ayudhyā, which they utterly destroyed in April 1767.

But soon after the Governor of Tāk, a man of Chinese origin, proclaimed himself King of Siam, under the name of Phra Chao Tāk Sin, gathered the remnants of the Siamese army, and suc-

The Thai were still in Yunnan, where they had founded the powerful Kingdom of Nan-Chao. They emigrated by and by into the fertile plains watered by the Menam and the Mekhong, but it was not until the middle of the XIIIth. century that they rose to independence. In the North, Mangrai, a descendant of the Princes of Chieng Sen, drove away the Mons from Lampūn and founded the city of Chieng Mai at the end of the XIIIth. Century. His contemporary and friend Rāma Khamheng, whose father Indrāditya had waged successful wars against the Khmers and established his dynasty at Sukhodaya, conquered the whole Menam valley and the Malay Peninsula as far as Ligor (Nakhon Si Thammarat). This first Hero of Siamese History still lives in the memory of the Siamese under the name of Phra Ruang, and his deeds are recorded on a well preserved stone, which visitors can see at Bangkok in the Vajirañāṇa Library.

"The dynasty which reigned during a part of the XIIIth. and the first half of the XIVth. centuries at Sukhodaya and S'ri Sajjanālaya, on the Upper Menam Yom, is the first historical Siamese dynasty. It has a double claim to this title, both "because its cradle was precisely in the country designated by "foreigners as Siam, and it is this dynasty which, by freeing the "Thai principalities from Cambodian yoke and by gradually "extending its conquests as far as the Malay Peninsula, paved the "way for the formation of the Kingdom of Siam properly so called. "Its rôle in the history of Indo-Chinese arts and institutions is not "less important than its political rôle: inheriting as it did the "succession of the Khmer Kingdom, which sank in part beneath "the blows that it administered, it transmitted to the Siam of "Ayudhyā a good number of Cambodian art-forms and institutions "which still subsist in the Siam of to-day." (1)

After one century's brilliance, Sukhodaya was eclipsed by a new dynasty, whose founder Rāmādhīpati, a former Prince of U-thong (near Supan), established in 1350 A. D. his capital at Ayudhyā, on an island in the Menam.

(1) G. Cœdès, *Origins of the Sukhodaya dynasty*, in *Journal of the Siam Society*, Vol. XIV.

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ceeded in driving the Burmese away. He established his residence at Thonburi, on the western bank of the river, opposite Bangkok. After several years of reign, he was seized by religious madness, and one of his generals, Chao Phya Chakri, on his return from a victorious campaign against Cambodia, proclaimed himself king in 1782 A. D., and established his residence on the Eastern side of the Menam, on the actual site of Bangkok.

The Kings of the present Chakri dynasty, whose names will be often mentioned in the notices on the monuments of Bangkok have been :

Phra Buddha Yōt Fā Chulālok, sometimes styled Rāma I, (1782-1809), who restored Siam to her ancient frontiers, and built the Royal Palace of Bangkok, the Wat Phra Keo and Wat Phra Chetupon.

Phra Buddha Loes Lā Nobhalai, or Rāma II (1809-1824), a son of Rāma I., who erected Wat Arun and Wat Sutat.

Phra Nang Klao, or Rāma III (1824-1851), a son of Rāma II, who completed and restored the temples and other buildings begun under his predecessors: under his reign, modern Siamese art reached its climax.

Phra Chom Klao (Mahā Mongkut), a son of Rāma II, (1851-1868).

Phra Chula Chom Klao (Chulalongkorn), a son of King Mongkut, (1868-1910).

Phra Mongkut Klao (Mahā Vajirāvudh), or Rāma VI, (1910-1925), a son of King Chulalongkorn.

Phra Pok Klao (Prajādhīpok), a son of King Chulalongkorn, the present reigning King.

RELIGION.

The national Religion of Siam is Buddhism.

The Buddhist religion has its origin in the doctrine taught in India, somewhere about the sixth century before the Christian Era, by a Prince of the Sākya clan, who had forsaken the worldly life to give himself up to philosophical meditation. It is, in the first

place, a way of salvation and a reaction against the omnipotence of the Brahmins. This reform involves two conceptions which are found at the root of the greater part of the Indian doctrines of this period: the belief in transmigration by which every life, be it divine or human or animal, is only reckoned as a phase in a cycle of innumerable regenerations,—and the belief in the virtue of the act (*karman*), by which every good or bad deed is reckoned necessarily to involve an appropriate consequence in either the present or future life. Pushing the Indian pessimism to the extreme, the Buddha, the Sage whose eyes are opened to Omniscience, declares that life with its train of physical and moral suffering, and death as the inevitable end, is thoroughly bad, and that the wise man should extend his efforts in trying to suppress the source of re-birth. Deliverance can only be attained by suppressing every act which automatically involves a consequence, and it is this method of suppression of an act which properly constitutes the doctrine of the Buddha.

Salvation can only be attained outside the world and its mirage, and from the first, the disciples of the Buddha constituted a small brotherhood of begging monks (*bhikshu*), seeking in retirement the way of salvation through meditation and inaction.

Buddhism is distinguished from the greater part of other religions by two essential characteristics. It admits of no rite, no sacrament, no formula conferring the Buddhist quality: laymen who have not been formally ordained are Buddhist by virtue of the single fact that they accept the teaching of the Buddha as being the truth, and they provide for the material maintenance of the community of monks. It is a religion without a god: once delivered, or, to use a technical expression the meaning of which has caused endless discussion, having attained Nirvāṇa, the Buddha is incapable of acting in favour of His faithful and it is solely the worship of His memory and His relics that constitute the essentials of the Buddhist cult. To the superficial observer, the prayer which the devout Buddhist addresses to the Buddha mentally or before his image, scarcely differs from that which the adept of any other deistic religion addresses to his god. As a

fact, it is distinguished in this respect by an essential characteristic. Instead of addressing a prayer, or a thanksgiving, or simply the expression of his love and devotion to an all-powerful and supernatural force, the Buddhist expresses the wish that the merit acquired by him in the accomplishment of some act or other may have, in virtue of the law of the *karman*, the result conforming to his desire. Such, at least, is the state of mind of the learned persons, for it is very evident that to the majority of the people who are still imbued with animist beliefs, such and such a formula or such and such an image is supposed to possess a magic virtue, and that the prayer expressed by means of this or that formula or in front of this or that image, becomes a prayer of direct intercession.

Buddhism in Siam is founded on the existence of a clergy, or rather a brotherhood of monks made up of men who have forsaken the world and have taken to the yellow robe for a more or less lengthy period of time. Ordination does not, in fact, necessitate everlasting vows, and there are few Siamese who have not spent several months at least in the monastery either as a novice (*sāmaṇera*) before reaching the age of twenty, or as a monk (*bhikkhu*) after attaining majority. Externally, the monks or the "bonzes" as the Europeans call them, are distinguished from the rest of the male population by their shaven heads and by their dress, which consists of three main pieces, a skirt, a scarf and a voluminous robe, all three yellow in colour. Besides the great prohibitions relating to the murder of living creatures, theft, adultery, untruthfulness and drunkenness, the monks should observe absolute chastity, live exclusively from alms, should not take food after midday, should flee from wordly distractions, renounce perfumes and finery, refrain from using any kind of seat or bed above a certain height, abstain from receiving gold or silver, without reckoning a host of other prohibitions relating to the life in common in the monasteries, the non-observance of which constitutes more or less serious sins which involve more or less severe sentences. Such is the theory, at least, but it is certain that

the exigencies of modern life have caused the code of monastic discipline to be stretched a few points.

Besides study and meditation, the chief occupations of the monks are the simultaneous recitation of texts taken from the Pāli scriptures, the exposition of the law to the faithful four times a month (on the 8th and 15th days of the waxing, and on the 8th and 15th days of the waning moon), the observance of certain religious and domestic feasts. Twice a month, at new moon and full moon, they gather together in chapter for public confession, when the *pātimokkha*, the cataloguing of sins of commission and of omission, is read.

The monasteries (*Wat*), wrongly called "pagodas" by Europeans, comprise partly a small town formed by the agglomeration of dwellings where the monks live, either alone or with their novices, and partly public buildings, the temple and assembly rooms where the ceremonies of worship take place. In Siam, the "bot" (*uposathāgāra*) or enclosure reserved for the assemblies of monks, and surrounded by eight boundary-stones facing the four cardinal and the four collateral points (*sīmā*), is usually distinct from the "vihan" (*vihāra*) or public assembly hall. In spite of its resemblance to the sanctuaries of other religions, the vihan differs from them essentially in the fact that it is not the sacred dwelling-place where the divinity is supposed to reside, but only an assembly room to which the faithful come to venerate the memory of the Buddha and to listen on prescribed days to the exposition of his law. It is a more or less large nave, more or less richly adorned, having its entrance usually from the east and sheltering on the west one or more statues of the Buddha on an altar. In front of the altar there is a seat on which the monk who is to preach the "sermon," sits. The various buildings around the vihan are salas, schools, sometimes the library where the Pāli manuscripts engraved on palm leaves are kept, and finally, small stūpas or "phra chedi" (*cetiya*) containing usually the bones of deceased persons.

The chief meritorious work of laymen consists in the maintenance of the monks. The cult in proper terms is reduced to the

offering of flowers, wax tapers and incense in front of the statue of the Buddha or such other image which evokes the memory of Him, such as the print of His foot (*Phra Bat*), and in the observance of several feasts. The latter are of two kinds: the *saṅghakamma* or acts of assembly of the monks such as ordination, consecration of the boundary-stones defining the consecrated ground—and periodical feasts such as the entry into retirement during the three months of the rainy season and the withdrawal, the distribution of the *Kathina* or clothes for the monks, the feast of the dead, etc.

Besides these ceremonies which take place in the monastery, the monks, following a custom dating back to the time of the Buddha, can accept invitations to go to the homes of laymen to partake of their meals and to preach there, or to sanctify some domestic feast with Pāli recitations. The cutting of the hair after puberty, and also marriage commence regularly with a “suet mon,” that is a recitation of *mantras* or formulae of good omen, by a small group of monks. The latter also play an important part in funereal ceremonies.

BANGKOK.

THE ROYAL PALACE.

The Grand Palace is in reality a walled town covering an area of over a square mile. Besides the Chapel Royal (Wat Phra Keo) to which a special notice is devoted, the principal objects of interest within the precincts of the Palace are the three Halls of Audience, viz., Dusit Maha Prasad Hall, Amarindr Vinichai Hall, and the Chakri Palace. The first two are contemporaneous with the foundation of the new city of Bangkok, in 1782, and were constructed during the early years of Rama I's reign.

I. Dusit Maha Prasad, which is considered as the finest building inside the Palace, and is certainly one of the jewels of modern Siam architecture, was erected for ceremonial purposes, such as receiving envoys from foreign countries, Biman Radhya

Hall, which stands behind, being used by the King as a place of residence.

King Rama I's coronation took place in Dusit Maha Prasad, but after his demise, the golden urn containing his remains was exposed in that Hall, and afterwards it became customary to hold the Coronation ceremony in Baisai Daksin Hall (see below).

II. Amarindr Vinichai.

The Amarindr Vinichai Hall is the anterior part of a system of chambers, the last of which was originally used as a place of residence. The middle Hall, Baisai Daksin, where important ceremonies (such as the Coronation), and solemn audiences take place, contains the gorgeous pavilion on which the King appears on these occasions.

III. The Chakri Palace is an imposing building constructed after the plans of a British architect in the style of the Italian Renaissance, but covered with a roof of pure Siamese style. The greatest part of it is occupied by the Throne Hall.

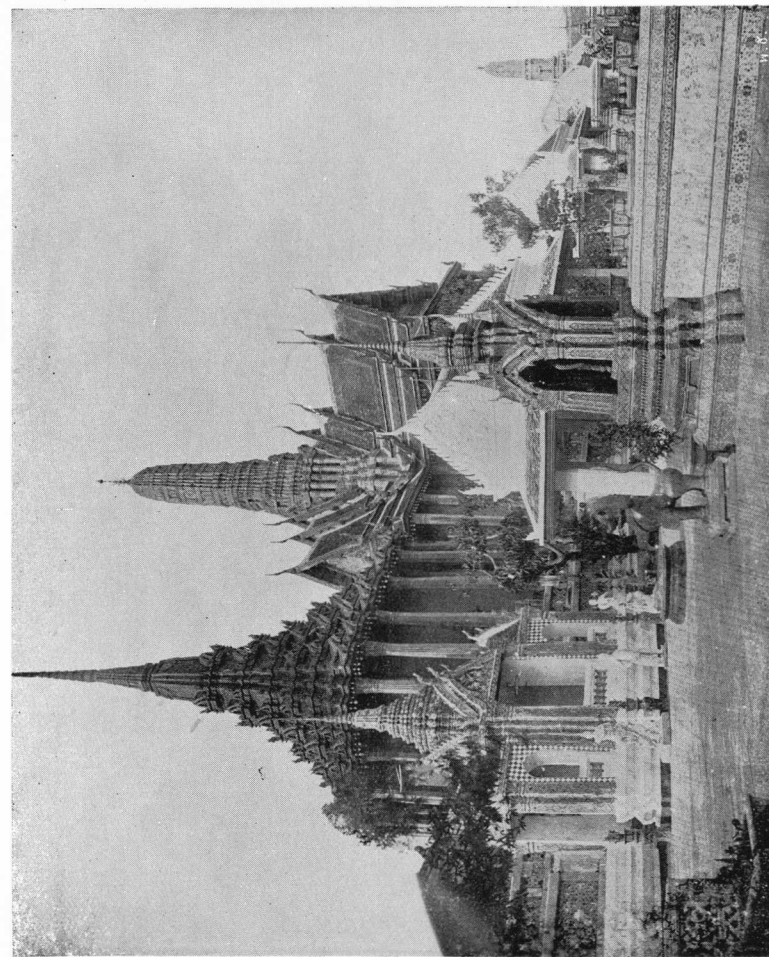
WAT PHRA KEO (THE CHAPEL OF THE EMERALD BUDDHA.)

The Chapel Royal or Chapel of the Emerald Buddha, usually called Wat Phra Keo, is the most interesting of Bangkok's temples. Since its foundation (1785 A. D.) it was never allowed to fall into decay. In 1848, King Rama III undertook important repairs, especially in the Chapel itself; King Mongkut added to the original edifices a number of important buildings; and on the occasion of Bangkok's centenary, His Majesty King Chulalongkorn made new and extensive repairs to the temple.

“The Royal Temple stands within the circumference of the “outer wall that surrounds the palace and the government offices, “and on account of the part it plays in important State ceremonies “and because it is the King's own place of worship, it is far more “elaborate than any of the other temples of the country A “central Phra Chedi stands in the courtyard of the temple, “surrounded by many similar structures of lesser height and “beauty. The large one in the centre towers high above “all the surrounding buildings It certainly looks like a “solid mass of gold, and at sunrise and sunset when it

"catches the roseate hues of the rising or the setting sun,
 "its golden surface can be seen from afar, shining and
 "glittering like a second sun itself, above the coloured roofs of
 "the temples and the white or many-tinted spires that are asso-
 "ciated with it. The smaller relic mounds are covered with
 "mosaics of glass and enamel roughly set in plaster At
 "a distance the rude character of the workmanship is totally
 "hidden, the tawdry appearance of the material is completely
 "lost, and as the uneven surfaces reflect the brilliant light of the
 "sun, the spire-capped shrines form a series of glittering satellites
 "around the central spire of gold The court-yard which
 "contains all the vari-coloured and fantastic shrines and images,
 "is paved with slabs of white stone and marble, which reflect
 "the heat and light of the sun with oppressive intensity. Other
 "creations in marble, bronze, stone, and wood, set with the same
 "mosaics of cheap china and common glass, and representing
 "Europeans, fishes, dolphins, and fabulous monsters are scattered
 "profusely but irregularly amongst the larger and more conspicu-
 "ous monuments. The roofs are covered with coloured tiles.
 "There is a central rectangle in orange, yellow or red with its
 "edges set parallel to the roof, while round it run several borders
 "in red, blue and green. Owing to the height of the buildings
 "these coloured roofs are always so far removed from the eye of
 "the spectator that they never lose their artistic appearance
 "Round the edges of the roofs of several of the constituent build-
 "ings of this Royal Wat are hung many small sweetly toned
 "bells, whose silvery voices may be heard in the farthest corners
 "of the enclosure as they swing to and fro with every gentle
 "breeze. The windows and doors are deeply sunk in the extre-
 "mely thick walls. They are covered with black lacquer and look
 "as though they were made of ebony. Designs in mother-of-pearl
 "have been worked into the lacquer, while the hinges and fasten-
 "ings of the separate shutters have been richly gilt." (1)

This collection of chapels, halls towers, etc., can be divided
 into two groups:



Bangkok
 Wat Phra Keo.

1) the Bot or Chapel of the Emerald Buddha properly so called, and the small edifices which stand around, viz., three small chambers on the west, twelve salas (four on the northern and southern sides and two on the eastern and western), the belfry on the south and a small chapel in the south-eastern corner; 2) the buildings on the platform on the North of the Bot, to which can be added the Library in the north-eastern corner and another small chapel in the north-western corner.

1) The Bot or central chapel was erected by King Rama I according to the usual plan of Siamese temples, for the purpose of keeping the famous Emerald Buddha, whose story is thus related by King Mongkut himself:

“Those persons having understanding, both those who are
 “followers of the Buddhist religion and those who are friendly to
 “His Majesty the King of Siam, are invited to listen to the fol-
 “lowing account of the Buddha Gotama made of a solid beau-
 “tiful green stone, or jasper. It is supposed to have been
 “made by the ancient followers of the Buddhist religion,
 “but by whom it is not certainly known by the people of
 “present day, for its narrative account is lost in antiquity. The
 “image was made to represent the Buddha Gotama, but at
 “what time it was made it can not be ascertained; yet it
 “is ascertained that it must have been made many years ago,
 “probably within the first 2000 years after the death of Buddha
 “Gotama corresponding to the year 1457 of the Christian era, for
 “it has been worshipped for a long period.

“We cannot give an account which is certainly worthy of
 “belief, because many of the Cambodians, the Northern Siamese
 “and the Lao Shiang and Kao, have a tradition, which is handed
 “down to the present day, that this jasper image has been in each
 “of their respective countries at such a time; but the evidence of
 “these persons cannot be trusted, as they exceed the bounds of
 “truth and they do not agree with each other. These traditions
 “are probably mere conjectures, and are not worthy of credence.

(1) E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, pp. 286-290.

"We shall, therefore omit these statements, and give the account which is most current in Siam, from the time it was certainly known, and which cannot be gainsaid.

"1979 years after the death of the Buddha Gotama corresponding to the year 1436 of the Christian era, a small pagoda, which was within a large one, in the city of Chiengrai, in the Kingdom of Chiengmai, was struck by lightning and destroyed when this jasper image was discovered; but it was supposed to be made of common marble and not of jasper. It was then placed in the temple. After being there two or three months, the gilding wore off, when it was discovered by all that the image was made of jasper. It was then removed to the city of Lampang, one of the then capitals of the kingdom of Chiengmai, where it remained 32 years. In the year 2011 of the Buddhist era, or the year 1468 of the Christian era, it was removed to the new city of Chiengmai, the new capital of the kingdom, where it remained 84 years. In the 2095 Buddhist year, or 1552 of the Christian era, the kingdom of Chiengmai became weak, and the kingdom of Lao Kao became powerful, and obtained this jasper image, and removed it to the city of Lau, then the capital of the kingdom of Lao Kao where it remained 12 years. It was then removed to the town of Vieng Chan, the new capital, where it remained 215 years. In the year 2322 of the Buddhist era, or 1779 of the Christian era, the present capital of Siam was established, and the first king of the present dynasty, who then reigned under the title of Phra Bad Somdetch Phra Budh Yot Fa Chulalok, and occupied the present royal palace, subdued the whole Lao people who consented to yield to his authority. He removed the jasper image to the capital of Siam and placed it in the town built on the west bank of the river, in a place called Dhanapuri, where it remained 3 years. Immediately after the jasper image was brought down here, he commenced to build the present capital of Siam on the eastern bank of the river opposite the old town, and after 3 years it was completed.

"In the 2325 Buddhist year, or 1782 of the Christian era, in

"the 6th. month, corresponding to the month of May this jasper image was removed to the new capital, and placed upon a golden throne 34 feet $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches high and gorgeously arrayed with ornaments of gold and precious stones, which are changed 3 times each year." (1)

The sacred image which was installed in the Chapel on Monday, the 4th day of the waxing moon of the 4th month of the year B. E. 2327 (1784 A.D.), is placed upon a gorgeous altar. The upper part of this altar which is contemporaneous with the construction of the chapel, is raised on a basement added by King Rama III. On each side are two standing images of Buddha, Phra Buddha Yot Fa Chulalok, and Phra Buddha Loes La Nobhalai, personifying the first two kings of the present dynasty.

The aspect of the building itself has not changed much since its foundation. The timber-work was renewed by Rama III and King Chulalongkorn. The beautiful doors and windows, as well as the copper-plates which cover the floor were made during King Mongkut's reign. The wall paintings representing the Universe according to Buddhist Cosmology, and some episodes of the Life of Buddha are ancient and were partly restored under Rama III.

The two chambers on the western side of the Bot, were built by King Mongkut. The northern one (Phra Kromanusorn) contains images of Buddha made in remembrance of the Kings of Ayudhya, and the wall paintings made by In Khong, a famous painter of the middle of the XIXth century, represent episodes from the history of the ancient capital.

The southern chamber (Phra Rajabongsanusorn) is very similar, but the images of the Buddha and the wall paintings refer to the present dynasty, especially to the first reign.

The twelve salas surrounding the Bot were made by Rama I, and restored under King Chulalongkorn. They sheltered until quite recently old and interesting remains brought from various countries (Java, Cambodia, etc.), which are now exhibited in the Museum of the Royal Institute.

(1) Bowring, *The Kingdom and People of Siam*, vol. I. pp. 316-318.

The bronze image of the Rūsi or hermit, which can be seen between the two western salas, is a fine piece of modern Siamese workmanship: it is said to have the power of healing diseases.

The small chapel of the south-eastern corner (Phra Gandhararāj) and the high belfry were both built during the reign of King Mongkut.

2) The nucleus of the second or northern group of buildings is the Mahāmandapa, a square pavilion erected by Rama I, on the site of the ancient Library which was destroyed by fire as soon as completed. This pavilion was built for the purpose of keeping the scriptures, and was restored by King Mongkut.

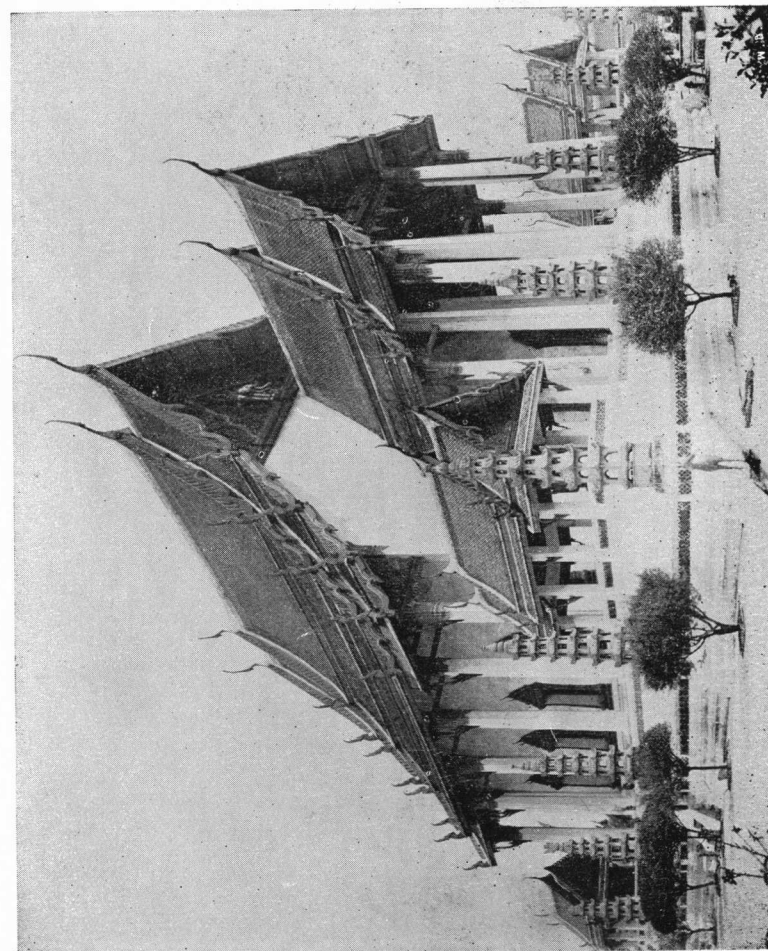
The platform or terrace upon which it rises was enlarged by the same sovereign, who constructed at the same time the other two edifices:

The stūpa called Phra Sri Ratanachetiya was begun in 1855 and completed by King Chulalongkorn, who adorned it with gold-coloured tiles.

The Pantheon was also begun in 1855, originally planned as a special chapel for the Emerald Buddha, but it was afterwards found too small for the purpose of ceremonies. It was renewed in 1903, after its partial destruction by fire. His Majesty King Rama VI ordered a few years ago that the statues of His five ancestors be kept in that temple and worshipped on certain dates of the year.

On the northern part of the same terrace is a model of the famous temple of Angkor Wat in Cambodia; this model was begun under King Mongkut and completed under his successor.

On the north-eastern corner of the courtyard, the Library, with its beautiful frontons in carved wood, and built by Rama I for keeping the sacred books which were too numerous in the Mahāmandapa. One should not fail to see in this Library the magnificent bookcases in lacquered teak-wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl, which were made by order of Rama I and are considered as the best specimens of that kind of work.



Bangkok
Wat Sutat.

The covered gallery which runs round the temple courtyard, is interesting on account of the wall-paintings which represent episodes from the Ramakien (the Siamese version of the Indian epic Rāmāyaṇa). They were made during the reign of Rama I, renewed a first time under Rama III, and again under King Mongkut.

Besides the buildings just enumerated, the precincts of Wat Phra Keo contain several objects of interest: giants, bronze images of lions, elephants, oxen, monkeys of good modern workmanship. The nine towers standing in a row on the eastern side of the temple ground were erected by Rama I. The colours of the glazed tiles with which they are covered are different for each tower and correspond with the colours of the nine planets.

WAT PHRA CHETUPON.

On the site where Wat Phra Chetupon (*Jetavana*) stands now, was an old temple called Wat Bodhārām (Temple of the sacred fig-tree) and Wat Po is still its popular name.

A new temple was begun in 1793 by Rama I who installed in the various chapels several old statues from Ayudhyā. Restorations and additions were made by Rama III, and general repairs by King Chulalongkorn.

The plan of the buildings which form Wat Phra Chetupon may seem somewhat intricate to the visitor who sees them for the first time, but it is in fact very simple. The central chapel or Bot is in the middle of a court-yard enclosed in a square gallery sheltering endless rows of images of Buddha in a sitting posture. Each side of this gallery is interrupted by small chapels containing images of Buddha. Outside this gallery is a kind of cloister, and on the west are four high stūpas and a huge temple containing a colossal image of the reclining Buddha. An outer wall encloses that complex of buildings.

The central chapel (bot) and the galleries with their axial chapels were built during the reign of King Rama I, but the bot was restored by King Rama III. The chief objects of interest in these five chapels are the statues of Buddha which come from various ancient temples.

The central image in the bot comes from Wat Sala Si Na (now Wat Guha Svarga in Thonburi on the western bank of the Menam).—The big standing Buddha in the eastern chapel comes from Wat Sri Sarapet, Ayudhyā, and the sitting Buddha in the same building has been brought from Wat Khao Indr, Savankalok.—The southern chapel contains two sitting images of Buddha, one of which comes from Ayudhyā.—A statue of the Buddha sitting on the polycephal snake, which comes from Lopburi, is kept in the western chapel.—Both statues in the northern chapel are new.

The four western stupas or Phra Chedis are good specimens of modern Siamese architecture. Originally, there was only one, covered with green tiles, built by Rama I in the axis of the temple: fragments of an old bronze image from Wat Srisarapet (Ayudhyā) are kept inside. The other two, white and yellow, on each side, were added to the original one by Rama III. The fourth (blue) Phra Chedi was constructed by King Mongkut. These four Phra Chedis are sometimes considered as personifying the first four kings of the present dynasty.

The temple of the reclining Buddha (or the Buddha entering the Nirvāna) was built by Rama III, and is now one of the chief objects of interest in Wat Phra Chetupon.

WAT SUTAT.

The construction of Wat Sutat was first undertaken by Rama I, but it was not much advanced when the King died. It was continued by Rama II and completed under Rama III's reign, and partially renewed by King Chulalongkorn.

The temple is essentially composed of two big chapels, one almost square, opening towards the north, and the other, long and narrow, opening towards the east and situated to the south of the first.

The first temple or Vihan is erected on a high terrace, in the centre of a court-yard enclosed in a covered gallery full of sitting Buddhas. The most conspicuous feature of the building is its double roof.



Bangkok
Wat Arun.

John Crawford visited this building only two years after its construction and his description is worth reading.

“ After passing on between two or three miles behind the
 “ palace, we came to a spacious temple, which was commenced by
 “ the present King about two years before, and was not yet finished.
 “ This was of the same general form as those I have already
 “ described, but in costliness and magnificence far excelled them.
 “ The doors and window-shutters, and the capitals and pedestals
 “ of the wooden columns, were curiously and laboriously carved al-
 “ most throughout, exhibiting figures of flowers, trees and animals :
 “ this carved work was again richly gilt. The central temple,
 “ which in this case, was raised on a very elevated terrace consisted
 “ of but one chamber, or fane, measuring fifty-eight and a half
 “ English feet in height, seventy-one and a half in length, with a
 “ breadth equal to the height. A single brass statue of Gautama
 “ occupies this noble chamber, for such it unquestionably is. The
 “ image, exclusive of the pedestal, measures, in its sitting posture,
 “ twenty-nine and a quarter feet : from the point of one knee to
 “ that of the other, it is twenty-two feet nine inches. This was an
 “ ancient statue, lately brought down the river from the town
 “ of Sokotai by order of the King. The minor images in the
 “ gallery of the quadrangular enclosure of this temple were one
 “ hundred and sixty in number, all of plaster, and most of them
 “ in an unfinished state.”

The great temple (Bot) lying on the south is a long building of 72 m., famous on account of the group of statues which are grouped inside at the base of the altar. There, just below the colossal image of Buddha, is a smaller one presiding over an assembly of his eighty great disciples. These are represented life-size, painted with natural colours, and the sight of this silent council never fails to make a deep impression upon the imagination of the visitor.

WAT ARUN.

Wat Arun, whose high tower is the most characteristic monument of Bangkok, was formerly an old temple called Wat Cheng, and this old name is still in use among the people.

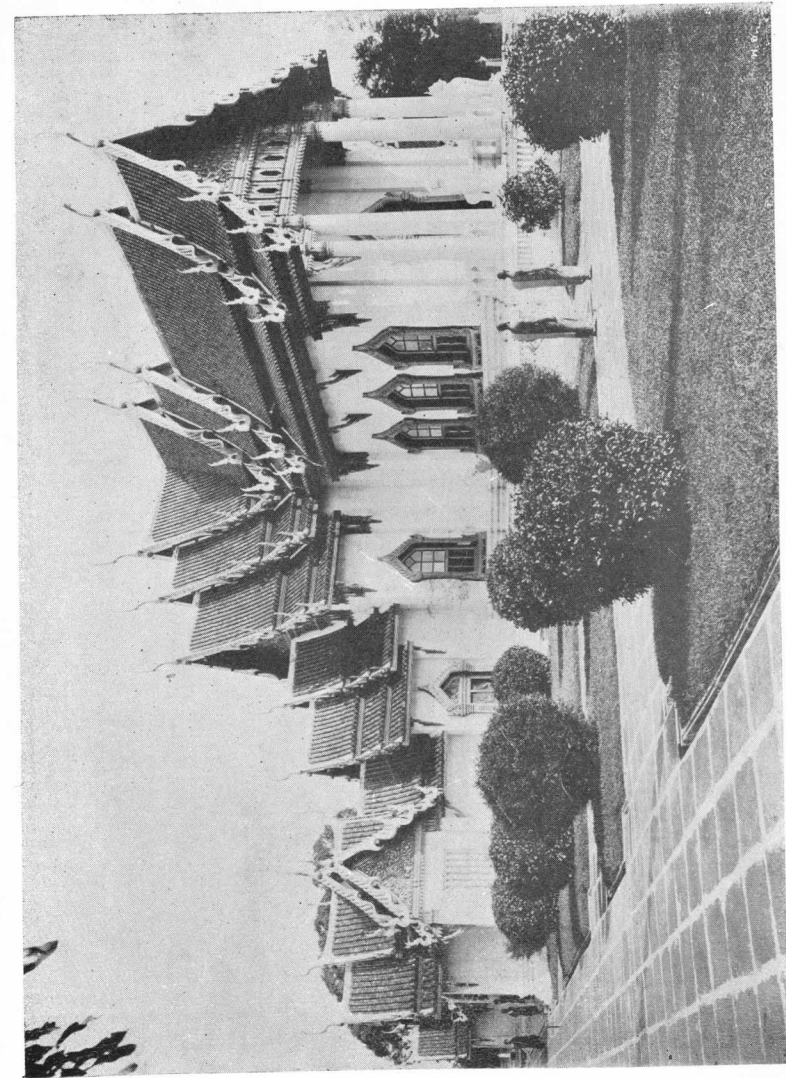
While Phra Chao Tāk Sin was residing at Thonburi, he restored the ancient chapel, which was rebuilt again by Rama II. The construction of the great tower dates back to the reigns of Rama II and Rama III. King Mongkut added some buildings to the original ones and King Chulalongkorn constructed a new bot, the ancient one having been destroyed by fire.

The chief attraction of Wat Arun is of course the tower or Phra Prang, 74 m. high, from which the visitor enjoys a beautiful view of Bangkok, the Palace and Royal temples, the river, and the harbour.

This tower rises in the centre of a square whose corners are marked by four smaller towers, the plan being thus somewhat similar to that of Angkor Wat's upper terrace. The central tower is supported by a series of basements resting on caryatids of various kinds (angels, giants, monkeys, etc.). The god Indra on his white elephant can be seen in each of the four niches. The lower terrace shows four small pavilions; each of these contains an image of Buddha represented in four different episodes of his life; birth, enlightenment, victory over the Evil Spirit, and death.

This group of buildings is entirely covered with fragments of porcelain.

"Viewed from a little distance, they look, as any photo shows, "like a collection of beautifully carved stone pinnacles, but a closer "view reveals the fact that they are only made of brick and "plaster and covered with divers figures made of broken plates "and saucers. Thousands upon thousands of pieces of cheap china "must have been smashed to bits in order to furnish sufficient "material to decorate this curious structure. It must be admitted "that, though the material is tawdry, the effect is indescribably "wonderful. It is not until one stands close to the work itself that "it is possible to realise that the elaborate designs and the quaint "figures are merely so many pieces of common china. The tallest "of the pagodas, the one in the centre, can be seen from many "points in the city, and by ascending the steps that lead half way "up to the summit, a magnificent view of the capital itself is "gained. The winding river and the broad canals shine like



Bangkok
Wat Benchamabodhi.

"ribbons of burnished silver; the houses are hidden beneath
 "masses of foliage, from amongst whose leafy crowns the prettily
 "coloured roofs and the graceful white spires of many temples
 "stand out in bold and picturesque relief. At sunset the details
 "of the structure of the pagodas of Wat Cheng are lost, but
 "the mass of spires and pinnacles takes on a purple tint which
 "changes to one of dusky hue, as the light fades slowly from the
 "sky. The whole edifice is in its way a triumph of decorative
 "skill of which the people are reasonably proud." (1)

WAT BENCHAMABOPIT.

This temple was built by King Chulalongkorn on the ground formerly occupied by Wat Sai Thong. It is a fine example of modern Siamese art, and was constructed with choice materials: Italian marble, Chinese glazed tiles, etc.

The main entrance is through a gate whose fronton in the form of a nāga is inspired by old Khmer art. The handsome iron railing was executed in the Marine workshop.

The two small pavilions on each side of the way to the temple are inspired by ancient Javanese architecture. The northern one shelters a Burmese image of Buddha in white alabaster. In the southern one, the visitor will admire a fine bronze statue of the Buddha sitting on the nāga: this statue was originally in Chaiya (Southern Siam) and bears an inscription of the XIIth century, in Cambodian, recording that it was cast by order of a King whose name is known as that of a King of Malayur (Jambi, in Sumatra).

The bot or chapel in white marble, covered with a roof made of red glazed tiles, is well proportioned and its internal decoration is very sober. The big image of Buddha inside is an exact reproduction of the famous Phra Jinarāj in Pitsanulok, which is considered one of the best statues of Buddha ever made in Siam.

Behind the chapel, a kind of cloister contains in its covered galleries an extremely interesting collection of images of Buddha of various origins. All the types which are known in Siam are

(1) E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow Robe*, p. 302.

represented in that unique collection. Besides, there are Indian, Burmese, Japanese specimens, either original or copies. Some are quite modern and display very good workmanship. Especially worth seeing are the two walking Buddhas from Sukhodaya, the first capital of Siam, which are just in the middle of the western gallery.

Among the other objects of interest in Wat Benchamabopit, are the Vihan Somdet with its fine windows in lacquer and gold, and the bronze figures of Rājāsīh on each side of the main entrance.

WAT RAJABOPIT.

Wat Rajabopit dates from the reign of King Mongkut. The plan of the temple reminds one of that of the famous shrine of Phra Pathom (ca. 50 kil. west of Bangkok).

The central building consists of a tall stūpa enclosed by a circular gallery interrupted by four axial chapels, two of these chapels serving as entrances to the inner courtyard which runs round the base of the stūpa.

This group of buildings is entirely covered with glazed tiles and slabs made in China, the effect of which is indescribably wonderful.

The stūpa rises over a vaulted room, in the centre of which is enthroned a big stone image of the Buddha sitting on the Nāga, coming from Lopburi.

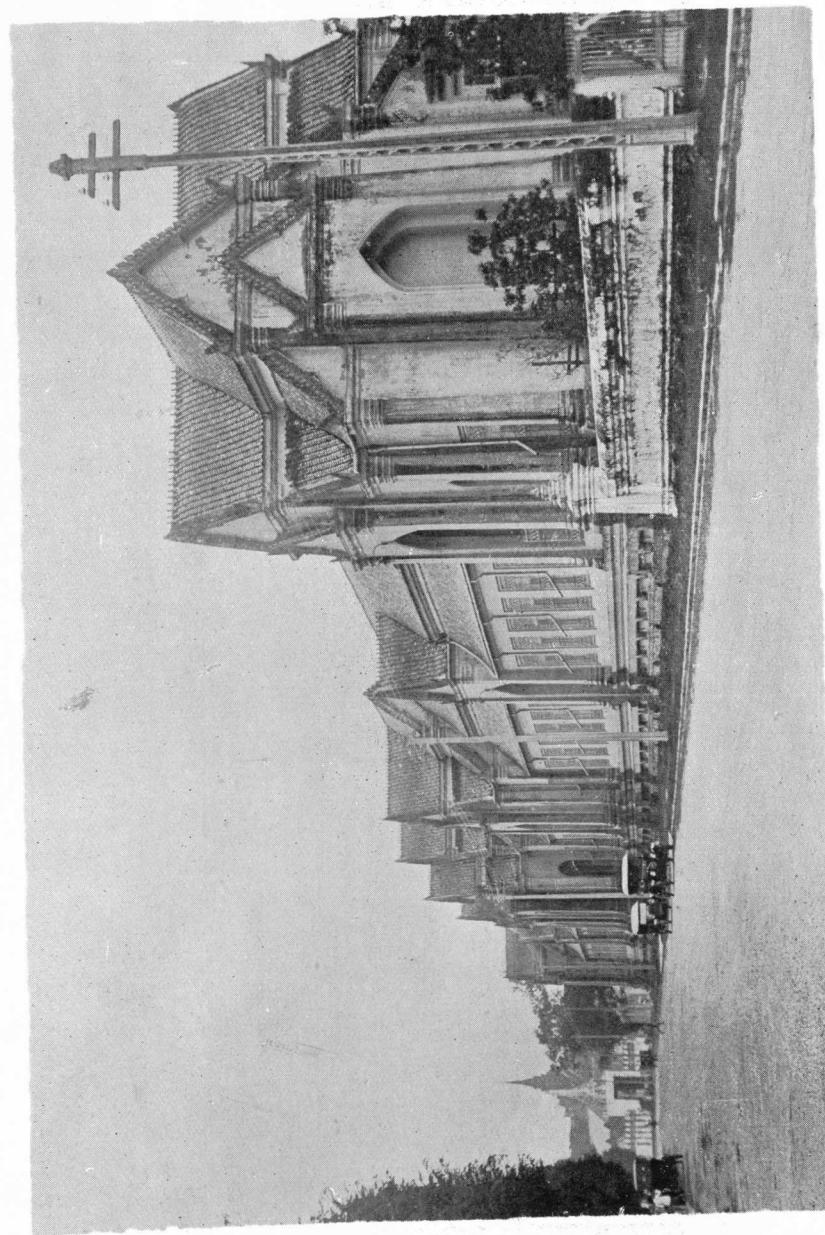
The niches in the exterior side of the stūpa contain other images of the Buddha in erect position, coming from various temples.

The northern chapel shows paintings representing episodes from the life of the Buddha.

Behind the temple is a garden containing a collection of small monuments of various styles, such as Indian pavilions, Cambodian towers, Siamese chedis, and even two small pavilions in Gothic style.

WAT SAKET AND PHU KHAO THONG.

Wat Saket lies outside the city-wall. It is one of the most important temples of the capital, and was built during the reign of King Rama I on the site of an ancient monastery called Wat



The Vajirāvudh Library.

Sakae. The new temple underwent repairs during King Rama III's reign, when the construction of a Phra Chedi of gigantic size was undertaken. But the soft ground could not stand the weight of that enormous mass of bricks. Later on King Mongkut took up his predecessor's work and constructed the stūpa which now rises over the crumbling ruins of the old Phra Chedi.

Wat Saket consists of two buildings, a bot and a vihan, besides extensive priests' quarters. The bot, which stands in the centre of a stone-paved courtyard enclosed by galleries, is built in the ordinary Siamese style. The interior of the bot is, as usual, occupied by a big sitting image of the Buddha, the long sidewalls being covered with frescoes consisting of three rows of kneeling deities. Behind the image of the Buddha, the frescoes represent the tortures of the Buddhist hell.

The square gallery enclosing the bot is interrupted by four entrances, and against its walls in the long corridors are placed 163 sitting and four standing gilt images of the Buddha.

The vihan is of a style similar to that of the bot, though slightly shorter and taller. Inside the vihan and facing north is a gigantic standing image of the Buddha, brought down from Ayudhyā; it measures nine metres in height. The solid teakwood doors of this building are exquisitely carved and richly gilt.

In two of the corners of the courtyard are smaller buildings sheltering rows of Buddhas.

Two winding staircases with low steps lead up to the summit of the Phu Khao Thong or "Golden Mount," which is crowned with a Phra Chedi. The relic enshrined in it is a piece of bone of the Buddha discovered in 1898 in the ruins of the Piprahwa stūpa near the Nepalese border in India.

From the platform on both sides of the Phra Chedi, one can enjoy a unique view over the capital.

Wat Saket is the place for cremations par excellence, and during the dry season, the two pavilions for cremating the dead are in constant use.

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM.

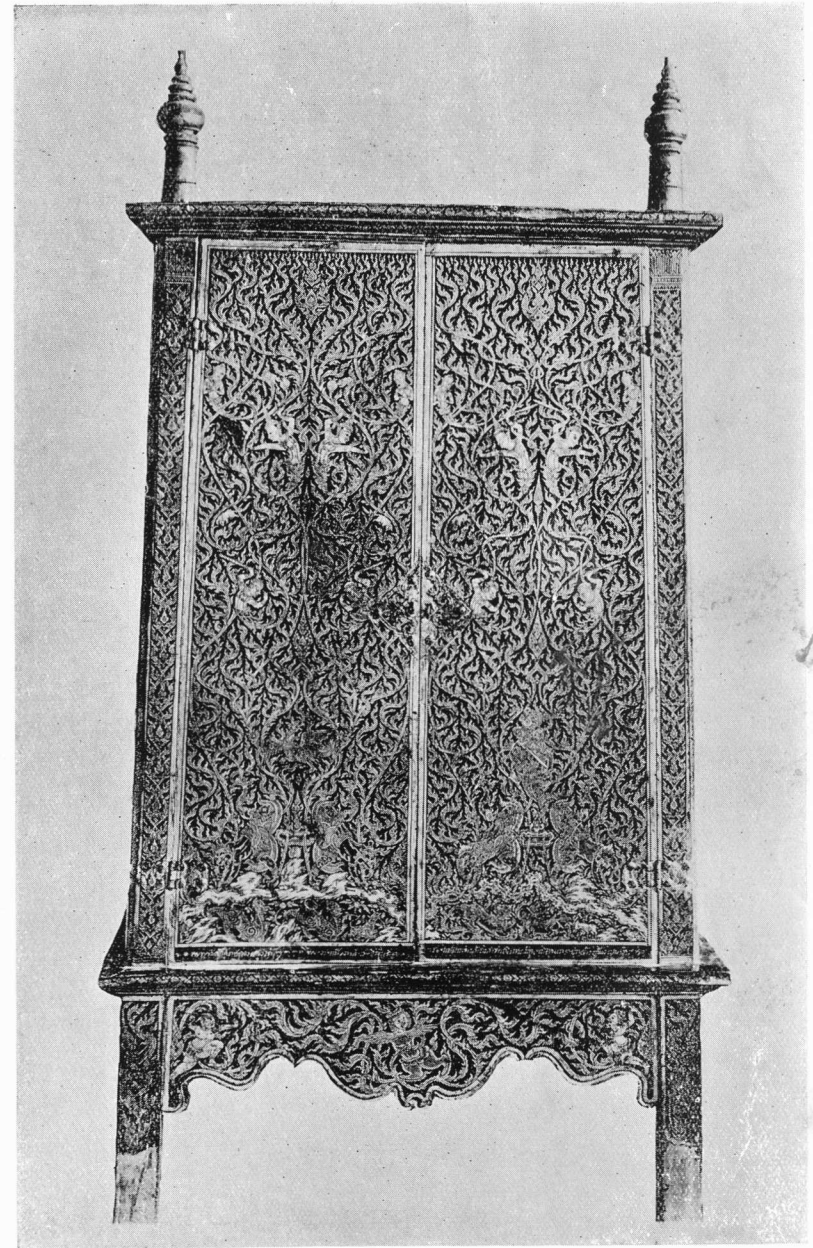
The National Library is now a section of the Royal Institute of Literature, Archaeology and Fine Arts established by a Royal Decree of April 19, 1926, but the origin of the Library as a national institution goes back to 1905.

The National Library is divided, in the customary way, into two main departments, viz. Manuscripts and Printed Books.

The department of Manuscripts housed in one of the buildings of the Museum is called the Vajirañāṇa Library, in memory of the name borne by King Mongkut when he was in the priesthood, before his accession to the throne. The collection of Cambodian Pāli Manuscripts in the Vajirañāṇa Library is certainly the richest in the world. They are kept in magnificent lacquer and gilt bookcases, which are the chief object of interest for the passing visitors to be seen in the Library. The collection of Siamese manuscripts is also unrivalled in any other country. It comprises prayer books, religious works and works of literature, history, as well as technical treatises, books on law, and even archives. These manuscripts, which are considered the most interesting for visitors to see, either on account of their artistic value or because they are representative of a special class of work, are exhibited in a series of show-cases. A considerable number of old inscriptions on stone may be seen in the galleries of the Vajirañāṇa Library.

The department of printed books, is known as the Vajirāvudh Library in memory of H. M. King Mahā Vajirāvudh or Rāma VI, whose collection of books was, after His demise, made over to the National Library. This department, which occupies an independent building in front of Wat Mahathat, is divided into two sections, Siamese and Foreign (including European, Chinese, Sanskrit books, etc.). Maps of every description are incorporated in this department, and a special section of pictorial records comprises drawings, pictures, and photographs of eminent persons or of objects of interest.

The public has free access to the Vajirāvudh Library and can make use of several reading-rooms, one of which is specially



Lacquer and gilt bookcase dated B. E. 2331
(1788 A. D.)

reserved for the readers of newspapers and magazines, both Siamese and Foreign.

The Muséum occupies the Wang Nā or Palace of the Second King. It is a National Museum devoted to Siamese art and archaeology, and it is like the National Library, under the management of the Royal Institute.

The first building, facing the entrance gate (Sivamok Hall), is occupied by the Vajirañāṇa Library, where, as already mentioned, Pāli and Siamese manuscripts are kept in beautiful lacquer and gilt bookcases.

The next building, to the right of the former (Buddhaisawan Hall) is a fine work of art by itself, and has been purposely left almost empty, in order that the visitors might enjoy the sight of the beautiful frescoes which adorn its walls. Towards the centre of the hall, the famous image of the Buddha Sihing, which is said to have been cast in Ceylon in remote times, is enthroned on a high altar. Behind this altar, a unique collection of buddhist votive tablets is exhibited in a number of show-cases.

Behind Buddhaisawan Hall, another large building (Issara Vinichai Hall) is entirely devoted to Bronze. Here the different periods and styles of Siamese art are represented by a considerable number of images and objects of every description: brahminical gods of Indian or Cambodian workmanship, Siamese images of the Buddha, vessels and domestic utensils, etc.

Between this hall and the next one, an antechamber displays various images and fragments of statues in stone. The statues of bigger size are exhibited in the verandah running round the last building of the Museum. Here too, the different schools of Siamese art are represented by wonderful pieces, coming from various parts of Siam. There are also good specimens coming from neighbouring countries, such as India and Java.

The last building (Phra Viman) contains in its nine rooms the best productions of modern Siamese art; royal thrones and modes of conveyance, furniture, weapons, dancers' masks, musical instruments, cloth, etc.

BANG PA-IN ⁽¹⁾

At a distance of 58 km. from Bangkok along the Northern line of the State Railways is Bang Pa-In. In this locality, a Royal Palace has been a royal country seat from the Ayudhyan period down to the present time.

HISTORY OF THE BANG PA-IN PALACE.

Originally, there was at this point of the river a large island, on which Phra Chao Prasad Thong's family, on the mother's side, used to live and on which he himself is said to have been born. When, therefore, he became King in Ayudhyā (A. D. 1630-1655), he dedicated his family estate to religion and there built a temple which is known by the name of "Wat Chumpon Nikayaram."

He then had a new palace, surrounded by a lake, built in the middle of the island, where he could go and stay from time to time.

Such is the origin of the Bang Pa-In Palace.

This Palace, surrounded by a lake 400 m. long and 40 m. broad, together with the Chumpon Temple, is all that is left of the construction work of Phra Chao Prasad Thong at Bang Pa-In.

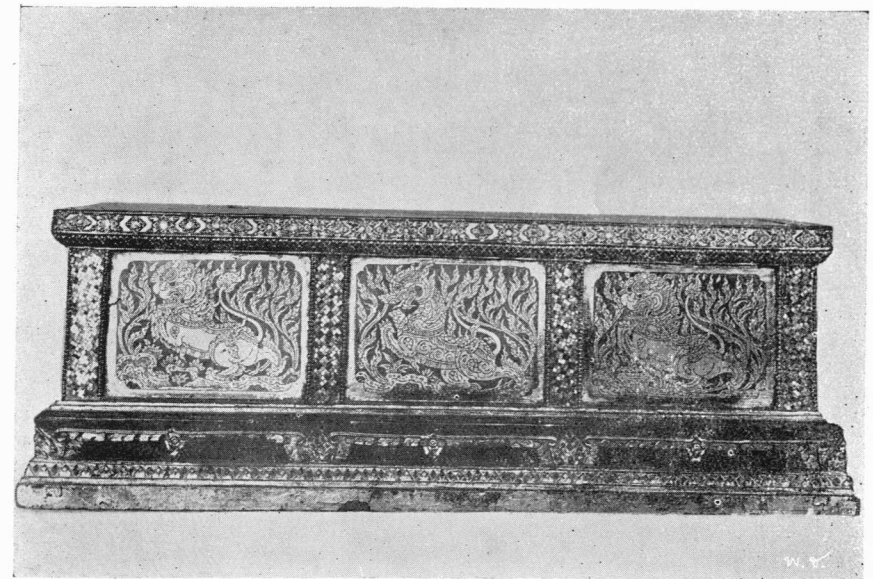
The river channel now running past the front of the island owes its origin to the same king. From a canal dug in order to enable access of the royal barges to the new Palace, it gradually widened into the main water course, thus dividing the island into two and causing the former channel at the back of the island to become more and more shallow, so that it is now simply a small canal.

On account of its propinquity to the old capital, the Bang Pa-In Palace was used as a country residence by every monarch who succeeded Phra Chao Prasad Thong on the throne of Ayudhyā. But when the capital was transferred to Bangkok and distance had thus to be taken into account, it ceased to be so used and it was left unoccupied for more than 80 years. It was only in the fourth

(1) Translated from a Siamese Guide-book composed by H. R. H. Prince Damrong.



Chest used for keeping Pāli manuscripts.



Box used for keeping Prayer books.

reign of the present dynasty (A. D. 1851-1868), when steam launches came to be used as a means of transport in this country, that His Majesty King Mongkut visited Bang Pa-In once more and had a house built there in the precincts of the old Palace thus making it a royal country seat again.

It was only in the fifth reign (A. D. 1868-1910) that His Majesty King Chulalongkorn, pleased with the place, went there every year and had the Royal Palace constructed as it now stands.

PLACES OF INTEREST AT BANG PA-IN.

Bang Pa-In is one of the places worth visiting by foreigners coming to Siam, just as the inhabitants of the country continually visit it themselves, for the trip there and back can be effected with convenience by taking a train leaving Bangkok in the morning and, after going over the Palace there, by coming back to the capital in the afternoon of the same day either by rail or, if arrangements are made to that effect, by river, in a motor-boat or a steam launch, as the case may be.

Besides, during the high water season, Bang Pa-In may be made a centre of excursions in various directions either in a rowing boat or in a small motor launch.

THE BANG PA-IN PALACE.

Among the many places of interest at Bang Pa-In, is the Royal Palace, for a visit to which, however, permission is required.

It contains five important buildings :—

(1) Phra Thinang (Royal building) Aisvarya Dib Asana, which stands in the middle of the lake and has taken the place of a former building of the same name, that had been erected by Phra Chao Prasad Thong. There is this difference, however, that the old building stood at the edge of the lake on the western side, opposite to the site of the present one.

(2) Phra Thinang Varobhas Biman, situated to the north of the Royal Ladies' Landing Place at the original site of the Pavilion built in the fourth reign. It was originally a building of two stories, the one being used as the King's apartments and the

other as a Reception Hall. But when the Court was transferred to another building, the Pavilion, which was then falling into decay, was pulled down and was replaced by a new one consisting of only one story which now serves as a hall for state ceremonies.

(3) Phra Thinang Udyân Bhumisthir, a wooden building on the eastern edge of the lake, which is generally used for residence during the high water season.

(4) Phra Thinang Vehas Chamrun, a building of Chinese style, lying in the north, where the Court generally resides during the rainy and winter seasons.

(5) Phra Thinang Vidur Dasana, an observatory standing on a little island between Phra Thinang Udyan and Phra Thinang Vehus Chamrun, from which a view of the country may be taken to a considerable distance in all directions.

Besides the Royal Palace, the places of interest at Bang Pa-In include a shrine and two temples.

The shrine, now standing on the edge of the lake excavated under Phra Chao Prasad Thong, was originally only a small shrine set up by the inhabitants of the island, under a big Bodhi tree, in memory of the monarch just named. In the fifth reign, however, an image of the said king was erected and placed in a stone Prang which thus replaced the former shrine.

One of the temples, Wat Chumpon Nikayaram, lying at the head of the island by the bridge on the way coming from the Station, was built, as has already been mentioned, by Phra Chao Prasad Thong and restored under the fourth and fifth reigns. The two Phra Chedis in this monastery are considered to be of great beauty.

The other temple, Wat Nivet Dhammapravat, on the outer island, south of the Royal Palace, was built under the fifth reign, in Gothic style on the lines of Christian churches.

AYUDHYĀ. ⁽¹⁾

At a distance of 71 km. from Bangkok, along the Northern line is Ayudhyā. The station is near the river, and there are ferry-boats going across to the town which is to be found on the site of the old city.

I. AYUDHYĀ IN ITS CAPITAL DAYS.

The Ayudhyā of to-day, like that of old, is surrounded by rivers. Only, in the North, the Lopburi River has considerably deviated its course and, therefore, its channel here has become both narrow and shallow and is now merely a canal, bearing the name of "Klong Mûang" (the City Canal).

Formerly, when Ayudhyā was the capital, ships, such as trading vessels from abroad, coming up the Menam Chao Phya, had, when they reached the southern outskirts of the city, to stop at a place called "Khanon Luang" (Royal Custom House), situated at "Hua Lem" (the Point), on the eastern bank, below Wat Prôt Sat. There they had to notify the authorities and obtain from them the necessary permission, before they could proceed into the city area.

Beyond the Khanon Luang lay the outskirts of the city and the anchorage for ships and junks engaged in foreign trade.

On the western bank, near the mouth and on the southern side of Takien Canal, was the Malay Colony, with a Mosque called "Takia" which exists to this day.

North of this lay the Portuguese Colony, with two Catholic Churches.

On the eastern bank, above Koh Rien, was the Japanese Colony.

North of this, in order of succession, came the English, the Dutch and the Chinese Colonies, the last being in the Commune of Suan Plû, near the river bounding the city on that side.

(1) Translated from a Siamese guide-book composed by H. R. H. Prince Damrong.

The city itself lay at the junction, and the confluence southwards, of the two rivers, the Menam Chao Phya coming from the West and the River Sak coming from the East.

At the point of bifurcation forming a corner of the city, an important fort was erected with the name of Pom Phet (the Diamond Fort), remains of which may still be seen in front of the Lord Lieutenant's residence to-day.

When Ayudhyā was first founded by Phra Chao U Thong, it had as its walls, only a rampart with a stockade of tree-trunks planted on it. It was only in the reign of Somdet Phra Maha Chakrapatti that a wall of brick and mortar, 6 m. high and 3 m. thick, was substituted and a new rampart was constructed behind it. There were also set up 16 forts, 4 water-gates and 32 land gates.

The southern part of the city was the commercial quarter. It was here that the Chinese, Malay, Indian and European merchants largely settled.

In the North, were the Royal Palaces and the various public buildings.

The centre of the town is said to have been little inhabited and was, for the most part, unoccupied. That probably is why it was called "Pā Taung" or "Pā Thān" (Pā=Wilderness). This space had to be kept open, because, in those days, people generally went and settled outside the city in peace time, but, during siege time, they would come and take refuge within its walls.

The river-banks were thickly populated all round the city. The foreigners settled in colonies.

Along the river branching off westwards to the left, below Pom Phet, were to be found, on the southern bank, the Chinese, the Malay and Annamite Colonies successively. After that, came the Catholic Cathedral called St. Joseph to this day, the site of which was given to the Catholic missionaries by Somdet Phra Narayana, when they first came to the country.

On the northern bank, in the same part of the river, lay the French Factory and a number of residences of the higher officials whose duty it was to deal with the foreigners, such as the residences of Chao Phya Phra Klang and Chao Phya Vijayendra, which lay to the north of the modern distillery.

The house built by Somdet Phra Narayana for the accommodation of the French Ambassador was also located in this quarter.

North of this, above Klong Takien, the river bends Northwards.

The Peguan Colony occupied its western bank and on the eastern bank was found the main landing place for the western part of the city, called "Pratu Chai" (the Victory Gate), whence there was a road leading to the Royal Palace. Along this road, royal letters from foreign monarchs were borne in procession and foreign Ambassadors, on their way to the Royal audience, had also to land here and proceed along the same road.

Further North, lay Wang Lang (the Back Palace), and, north of this still, at the junction of the Menam Chao Phya and the Lopburi River, was the north-western corner of the capital called "Hua Lem" (the Point) to this day.

Here, at the site of the modern barracks, there was an important fort called "Pom Sat Kop".

Here, also, the Menam Chao Phya left the city and ran northwards, while the Lopburi River ran eastwards and formed the northern boundary of Ayudhyā.

On its northern bank, there was a boat-house where the river fighting boats were kept.

On its southern bank, stood the Royal Palace.

The Lopburi River, in its eastward course, continued to form the boundary of the city, until it reached a place called "Hua Raw" (the Weir). The name owes its origin to the fact that, in order to join up with the River Sak which formed the eastern boundary of the capital, a canal was dug from this point, and, in order to prevent the Lopburi River from running exclusively down this channel, a weir was made, which thus gave the name of the place.

Here was the north-eastern corner of city, and a big fort was built there (at the site of the modern market place), which bore the name of "Pom Mahachai" (the Great Victory Fort).

Here, also, the Lopburi River bends northwards and has, on its eastern bank, an enclosure whence, from the Ayudhyan down to the Bangkok period, the King would watch the capture of wild elephants.

South of this corner lay the Chandrakasem Palace, or, as it is also called Wang Nā (the Front Palace) now used as the Lord Lieutenant's offices. It was, in some reigns, the residence of the Court and, in other reigns, that of the Heir-Apparent.

South of Chandrakasem Palace, along the western bank of the River Sak, in front of the modern railway station, there was a harbour for the royal ships and junks engaged in foreign trade, which extended down to Bang Kracha, where the River Sak joins the Menam Chao Phya at Pom Phet, as already mentioned.

Such is the description of Ayudhyā in its capital days.

When once the capital was transferred to Bangkok, people came and settled there more and more and the old city Ayudhyā thus became deserted, but not so the river-banks which are still densely populated, and north of Chandrakasem Palace, there still exists a riverine market which is the biggest of its kind in this country to-day.

II. PALACES.

There are three Palaces in Ayudhyā: (1) Phra Raja Wang Luang (the Royal Palace). (2) Wang Chandrakasem or Wang Nā (the Front Palace), and (3) Wang Lang (the Black Palace) or Wang Suan Luang (the Royal Park), as it is also called.

THE ROYAL PALACE.

The Royal Palace, which was the residence of the Court in every reign of the Ayudhyan period, is situated near the city walls on the northern side.

The Lopburi River on this side of the town having become rather shallow, the Palace cannot be conveniently approached by water except during flood time, namely, from August to January. During the dry season, the only convenient access is by land.

There is a road, 2 km. long, leading to it from Chandrakasem Palace.

The Palace itself is, to a great extent, in ruins but the grounds are preserved by the Government and the site of the original Court and many other buildings can still be traced.

This Palace was built by Phra Chao U Thong at the same time as the capital, i.e. in 1350. The original Court was established near the site of the later one but to the south of it. It was in the reign of Somdet Phra Parama Trailokanāth (1448-1488) that this original site was dedicated to religion and that a temple, known as Wat Phra Sri Sarapet to this day, was built thereon and was thus included in the Palace compound. The Court, on the other hand, was moved to its present site nearer the river.

The works, thus commenced by Somdet Phra Parama Trailokanāth, now include:

(1) Phra Thinang (Royal Building) Suriyat Amarin, the northern building near the River, which replaced the Phra Thinang Bencharat of Somdet Phra Parama Trailokanāth and was built by Somdet Phra Narayana (1656-1688);

(2) Phra Thinang Sarapet Prasad, the middle building, which was used for State receptions and was built by Somdet Phra Parama Trailokanāth, with stables for white elephants on both sides of it;

(3) Phra Vihān Somdet, the southern building, which was used for state ceremonies such as the Coronation, and was built by Phra Chao Prasad Thong (1630-1655) in place of the Phra Thinang Mangalabbisek of Somdet Phra Parama Trailokanāth that had been burnt down. In the Ayudhyan period, it was commonly called "Prasad Thong".

(4) Phra Thinang Chakrapat Baijayant which stands near the lawn in front of the Palace on the eastern side and was used for watching military drill. It was built by Phra Chao Prasad Thong.

(5) Phra Thinang Trimukh, behind Phra Thinang Sarapet Prasad. The original building is supposed to have been a garden pavilion but it is not certain when it was built. Its foundations

were only discovered in the fifth reign by Phya Boran, Vice-Roy of Ayudhyā. It was on these foundations that His Majesty King Chulalongkorn had an open pavilion constructed according to the original plan. It is still the residence of the Court during the royal visit to Ayudhyā;

(5) Phra Thinang Banyong Ratanat, which stands in the middle of the lake at the back of the Palace and was built by Somdet Phra Petracha (1688-1703). It is also called "Phra Thinang Thay Sra" (the Royal Building at the back of the lake);

(7) Phra Thinang Song Pūn, the building furthest back on the western side, which, at first, was probably used for tournament exercises but which, after the Court was transferred to Phra Thinang Banyong Ratanat, came to be used as a reception hall, on account of its nearness;

(8) The Temple called "Wat Phra Sri Sarapet", the most important of all in Ayudhyā, which is to be found in the southern part of the Palace and the history of which will be given below in the section dealing with temples;

(9) The outer Palace walls, south of this temple, which were constructed on the lines of the fortified walls, and part of which can still be seen intact to-day;

(10) A great cast Image of the Buddha sitting, known as "Phra Mangala Bopit," which is placed in a Vihāra outside the Palace walls, on the south. No record is available as to when it was cast. All that is known is that its original location was outside the Palace, on the eastern side, and that it was transferred to its present site in 1603 by Somdet Phra Chao Song Tham;

(11) The Royal Esplanade in front and east of this Vihāra whereon was built, as occasion required, the Meru (Cremation Stand) for the cremation of the royal remains of Kings and of the more important members of the Royal Family.

CHANDRAKASEM PALACE.

This Palace, now used as Government offices, was originally in the Ayudhyan period, a Royal Palace. Somdet Phra Naresvara had it built in 1577, when he was still Heir-Apparent and Governor of Pitsanulok, in order that he might have a place

to stay in when he came to visit his royal father at Ayudhyā. He gave it the name of "Chandrakasem Palace," but it was commonly known as "Wang Nā" (the Front Palace), because it stood in front of the Royal Palace.

He made it his quarters during the struggle to throw off Peguan suzerainty and to win back independence for the Siamese nation. And even after he had come to the throne, he continued to reside there for many a year before he moved into the Royal Palace.

Two kings that came after him, namely, Somdet Phra Narayana and Somdet Phra Chao Boroma Koth (1732-1758), stayed there for a long time and added to the works there.

During the Ayudhyan period, Chandrakasem Palace was either the residence of the Court or that of the Heir-Apparent. But when Ayudhyā was lost to the enemy the last time, the Palace was completely burnt down, and it was left in ruins until the fourth reign of the present dynasty (1851-1868), when His Majesty King Mongkut had a portion of the old Palace restored in order that he might stay there during his visits to Ayudhyā. It continued to be used for this purpose until the fifth reign, when the Bang Pa-In Palace was substituted in this connection. It was then converted into Government offices for the Circle of Ayudhyā.

Most of the buildings that are there now were constructed in the fourth reign. Some of them were new creations while others followed the original plan of the old Palace.

A description of the more important of these is given hereafter:—

(1) The gate in the Palace walls was made in the fourth reign.

(2) The Chaturamukh Pavilion, with wooden walls, standing in the Courtyard, near the Eastern Palace Gate, was built in the fourth reign for royal residence but it has now been turned into a Museum in which, as also in places arranged for the purpose

near the Palace walls all round the Pavilion, are exhibited to the public the antiquities of Ayudhyā which have been collected by Phya Boran.

(3) Phra Thinang Biman Rathya, a group of buildings built in the fourth reign, along the lines of the Ayudhyan foundations, was originally intended for royal residence, but it was not completed in time in the fourth reign and, in the fifth reign, it was converted into Government offices, namely, the Viceroy's offices of to-day.

(4) Phra Thinang Bisay Sallakh, an observatory on the western border of the Palace, was originally built by Somdet Phra Narayana but had, at one time, fallen into decay and had to be restored by His Majesty King Rama IV, who gave to it its present name.

This is all that is left of importance in Chandrakasem Palace.

Outside the Palace, in the North, there is a prison for the Circle of Ayudhyā as well as a market-place, while, in the South, there are public buildings such as the Law Court, the Post and Telegraph Office, the Land Registration Office and the Gendarmerie Station.

WANG LANG.

Wang Lang is near the city walls on the western side (where the barracks now are). At first it was merely a Park with, perhaps, a lodge in it. It was made into a Palace at the same time as the Chandrakasem Palace in the reign of Somdet Phra Maha Thammaraja (1569-1590) and became the residence of Somdet Phra Ekatosarot who was his youngest son. Its name "Wang Lang" is derived from the fact that it lies at the back of the Royal Palace, just as Chandrakasem Palace standing in front of the said Palace is also called "Wang Nā." There is a difference, however, in that, unlike the Chandrakasem Palace, it never was the residence of the Court but only that of the members of the Royal House. There is, therefore, nothing of architectural importance to record in this Palace.

TAMNAK PHRA NAKHON LUANG.

This royal rest-house lay on the eastern bank of the River Sak, north of Chandrakasem Palace. Here the King used to take shelter from the heat when he was on his way to Phra Putthabad (the Buddha's Foot-Print) and spend the night when he was on his way to Lopburi. It was probably first set up in the reign of Somdet Phra Chao Song Tham (1620-1628) when the Foot-Print was discovered, but it was not made of brick and mortar until the reign of Somdet Phra Chao Prasad Thong who also built a temple north of the Tamnak, near the river, which exists to this day.

It came to be called "Phra Nakhon Luang" in this way. After quelling a Cambodian revolt which remained unrepressed under Somdet Phra Chao Song Tham, Somdet Phra Chao Prasad Thong, in order to enhance his prestige, had a Prasad (Mansion) constructed behind the Tamnak, on the model of, but on a smaller scale than, the Prasad of the same name in Cambodia. It was from the latter, therefore, that the name was taken.

The Tamnak is now in ruins but traces are left of the original foundations. The Prasad, however, has been converted into a temple and is kept in good condition by the monks.

III. TEMPLES.

There are, in Ayudhyā, innumerable temples of various sizes, and so mention will only be made here of the more important ones possessing an historical or other interest.

(1) Wat Phra Sri Sarapet is a temple in the Royal Palace, like the Temple of the Emerald Buddha in Bangkok. It was originally a Prasad built by Phra Chao U Thong when he founded the capital but it was converted into a temple by Somdet Phra Parama Trailokanāth who had transferred the Court to another building nearer to the river. In all probability, this temple, known as "Buddhāvās", was at first used for State ceremonies such as the Drinking of the Water of Allegiance and other religious ceremonies. Later on however, namely, in 1492, Somdet Phra Ramadhipati II, son of Somdet Phra Parama Trailokanāth,

built within its grounds a big Chedi (relic-shrine), in order to deposit therein the Ashes of his royal father and also those of Somdet Phra Boroma Raja, his elder royal brother. And in 1500 he further caused to be cast a gilt Image of the Buddha standing, 16 m. high, to which he gave the name of "Phra Sri Sarapet", after which, in turn, the temple was called.

This temple was also the depository of the most important Buddha images, whether those that were cast in subsequent reigns, such as Phra Lokanath which is now in the Eastern Vihan in Wat Po, or those that were obtained from elsewhere, such as Phra Buddha Sihing, now in the Museum, which was brought down from Chiangmai, after the capture of that town by Somdet Phra Narayana.

Here also were deposited the ashes of kings and members of the Royal House during the Ayudhyan period.

This temple, therefore, is the most important of all in Ayudhyā and has been recently excavated by the Archaeological Service.

(2) Wat Putthaisawan near the river, on the bank opposite to the city in the South, was built by Phra Chao U Thong in 1353 at a place called "Wieng Lek," i. e. the temporary residence of that king before the capital was built.

The object of interest here is the great Phra Prang (a relic-shrine with a blunt angular spire).

(3) Wat Phra Chao Panan Choeng is in the South of the town near the river. It is not known who built it. There is, however, a record giving the date of its foundation as 1324, 26 years before the foundation of Ayudhyā, by Phra Chao U Thong. It used to contain a large and important image of the Buddha sitting in the contemplative posture and it is from this fact that it has derived its name, which means the Temple of the Buddha sitting in the contemplative posture.

The image that is there now, however, was cast by Somdet Phra Naresvara and is still in perfect condition.

This image, together with the Phra Vihan, is an object of widespread veneration.



Ayudhyā
Wat Sri Sarapet.

LOPBURI ⁽¹⁾

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

Lopburi is a very old city and, as such, had no less than two golden periods, one in antiquity and one of more recent date. The town is full of old temples and other interesting ruins, and is therefore well worth visiting, more especially as it is quite near to Bangkok—in fact only four hours travel by the Northern Railway. The city lies on a branch of the Menam Chao Phya, called Menam Lopburi, 120 kilometres from the sea, and is built upon a sort of tongue of higher land stretching out to the Menam from the hills to the east of the town; to S. W. and N. it is surrounded by very low lying land, usually inundated during the rainy season.

The name of the town was in the olden times *Lavō*. It was later on altered to Lopburi and according to the legendary accounts of the Northern Chronicles, was founded by King Kalavarnadis called the black Tissa from *Taksila* A. D. 468.

The date may seem doubtful, but it must be remembered that there has been found in Lopburi (by H. E. Phya Boran, the former Viceroy of Ayudhya) an engraved stone pillar which, though bearing no date, by the archaic form of the letters points to a date not later than the VIth or VIIth century A. D., thereby confirming the approximate correctness of the date given by the Northern Chronicles. The language of the inscription is Mon.

The Nang Chāma Dēvi chronicle tells us that in A. D. 654 a king or emperor of Lavō sent his daughter, named Nang Chāma Dēvi, to govern *Haribhunjai*, the present Lampūn, by which we see that the sway of Lopburi at that time stretched far up to the North.

During the second half of the Xth century, Lavō was conquered by a King of Nakon Sri Thammarat (Ligor), whose son became King of Cambodia and incorporated the lower Menam

(1) Extracted from a paper by Major E. Seidenfaden (J. Siam Soc., XV, 2.)

valley into the Khmer empire. According to an inscription in Cambodian engraved under a bas-relief representing the chief of Lavō leading his troops (to be seen in the galleries of Angkor Wat), it appears that at this time, probably about A. D. 1150, Lopburi like the rest of Siam was still under Cambodian overlordship. We know that Sukhothai, as probably Lopburi also, cast off the Cambodian yoke about A. D. 1256 or 1257, and Lopburi was finally conquered by Phra Chao U Thong shortly before he made Ayudhyā his capital in A. D. 1350.

When Phra Chao U Thong in 1350 founded Ayudhyā, he appointed his son Phra Ramesvara to be ruler of Lopburi. The next time we hear something about Lopburi is during the first war between Burma and Siam, when it was conquered by the Burmese army in 1563. Five years later it was again taken by the Burmese, but the sojourn in this Siamese Capua proved too much for the Burmese soldiers, who were surprised and badly beaten by the King of Vieng Chan, the latter having hurried to the assistance of the King of Siam, besieged in his capital by the Burmese. Notwithstanding this victory, the Lāo king was soon after defeated by the Burmese and had to retire to his own country; as a result of which Ayudhyā was forced to surrender to the King of Burma. In 1602 Siam's famous warrior King Phra Naresvara, went to stay at Lopburi for his pleasure, an example to be followed by one of his successors, the well known King Phra Narayana. We do not intend here to relate in detail the events concerning Phra Narayana's reign—how the Greek adventurer, the talented Constantin Phaulkon, won the confidence and favour of the King to such an extent that he was raised to the rank of Chao Phya Vichayen, how he constructed palaces and forts for the King and specially in Lopburi, which place King Narayana had chosen for his summer residence since 1657, and further how Phaulkon induced the King to open diplomatic intercourse with France, sending Siamese Ambassadors to Louis XIV's court and receiving French Ambassadors in Ayudhyā and Lopburi; and finally how Phaulkon with his excessive zeal for



Lopburi
Wat Mahathat from the North-West.

converting the King to Christianity was, together with his master, overthrown by the envious noblemen, the leader of whom was Phra Petracha, and lost his life in 1688.

After the revolution in 1688 Lopburi fell into oblivion and its architectural splendours became mere ruins overgrown with jungle, in which state they remained for more than 150 years, until King Mongkut, the grandfather of His present Majesty, chose this as an occasional summer residence and repaired the walls of the citadel and one of the palaces (the wat-like Chandra-bhisan). Since then the town has revived and is now quite prosperous in a small way, situated as it is in one of Siam's most fertile regions.

THE MONUMENTS OF LOPBURI.

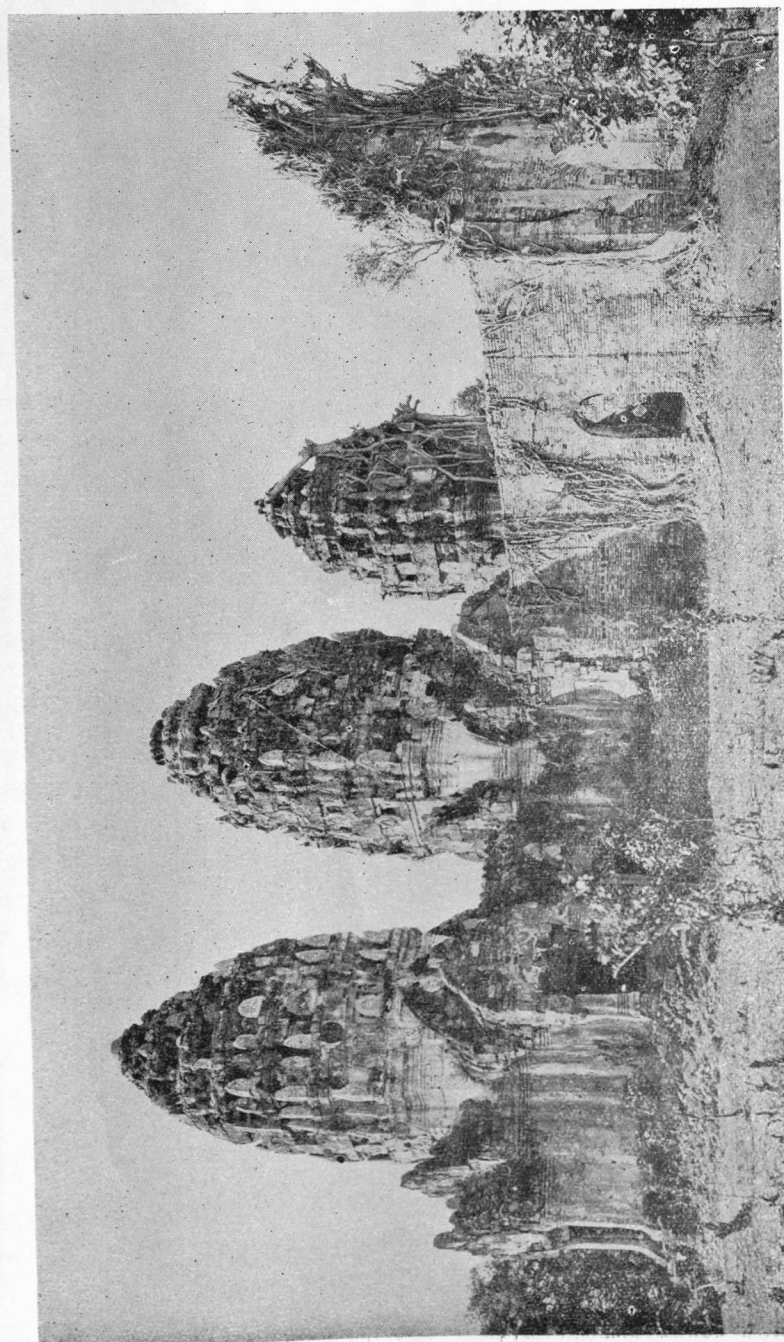
We will now start our sight-seeing,—beginning with the big temple lying close to the railway station and a little S. W. of the same. It is called *Wat Mahathat*. Inside the brickwalls, built in a spacious square, stands in the centre a tall “Prang” built of laterite. It is approached from the East by a steep stair-case which leads up to a now empty room where in pre-Buddhist days an image of a Brahmin god was placed. The building is unmistakably Cambodian work. Two other towers are seen to the right and left of the “Prang,” which is itself quite a fine example of the architectural skill of the creators of that stupendous and wonderful Angkor Wat. The other buildings inside the walls are of a later date, and distinctly Thai; so is the big Vihan adjoining the Prang to the east, also a Bot south of the Vihan and another building serving as a sort of entrance lying to the north of the Prang, and so finally are the rows of Phrachedis and Prangs inside the wall, all now in deplorable ruins. Inside the Bot are a great many stone statues of the Buddha sitting on the Nāga, most of them of good workmanship. This temple has been recently excavated by the Archaeological Service.

From this temple we follow the railway going north and, a few minutes after, we stop at a temple lying to the east of the line called *Nakhon Kosa*. It consists of a brick “Prang” in

Cambodian style, but was perhaps built by the Thai. Its chamber opens to the east and on the three other sides are niches, two of which are empty, the third one containing a standing Buddha. Just behind this "Prang", which itself is built on the top of a small eminence, the ground rises rather abruptly in the shape of a tall cubic hill, at the foot of which are the ruins of a small temple. The top of the hill is crowned with another building: probably it was another Prang.

We continue our walk and shortly after arrive at what is called *Sān Sung* (or *Sān Phra Kal*), *i. e.* the high sanctuary; it consists of a big pile of sandstone blocks and blocks made of that peculiar cement called "silaleng" (laterite) and is built in the form of a pyramid with two terraces. On the lower one, which is approached by a staircase from the west, an ugly, modern, iron-roofed shed has been erected, and in this, placed on an altar, are to be seen a standing image of a four armed Vishnu or Narai, having on his right hand a smaller image of the goddess Lakshmi; a fine female statue without a head is leaning to the wall behind the statue of Lakshmi. It is a curious fact that the Chinese especially adore and worship these statues, probably from a business instinct thinking it best to keep on good terms with the local genii! Behind this "Sān Chao" we mount some more steps and arrive on the top of the pyramid, where we find another brick building also of recent origin, inside which is seen a stone "soma-sūtra", *i. e.*, the stone on and in which the image of the god was placed. In the stone is cut a channel running round the sides of it and ending in an outlet behind the image. This was made to get rid of the soma or sacrificial drink which the Bhramins poured out in front of the god during the act of worship. A sculpture representing Vishnu lying on the snake Ananta is also kept in this building. A mighty banyan tree grows close to the pyramid and in its leafy crown dwells a joyous company of monkeys, which are quite tame and will come down to accept fruit out of your hands.

Not far from *Sān Sung*, on the other side of the railway line, lies the finest of all the temples: *Phra Prang*



Lopburi
Prang Sam Yot.

Sam Yot. This temple consists of three towers all built of sandstone and distinctly in Cambodian style, but they are all connected with each other by galleries; the towers have doors to all four sides and are on the outside adorned with the sculptures typical of such buildings: as for instance, over the western door of the central tower the god Indra sitting on the three-headed elephant and on the corners of the terraced superstructures, the sculptures of many Rishis (hermits). The snake motive so commonly seen over all Cambodian temple doors does not lack here too, but it is more or less destroyed, the sculptured stones having fallen down for the most part. The interior of the temple is a real treasury of sitting or standing images mostly of Buddha. It is possible that some of the standing ones are representations of disciples. Some are placed in the windows of the galleries and throughout the longitudinal axis of the temple, you see them sitting or standing everywhere, some hidden in niches and some placed in the centre of the towers. All the statues are of sandstone, many covered with a layer of lacquer upon which formerly the gold-leaf was stuck. On the eastern side of the temple is a brick building which quite spoils the "ensemble" of the temple. This building dates from Phra Narai's time.

Leaving this temple we strike westwards and are soon in the centre of the old town, where is standing another monument: three brick built towers called *Terasathan* or *Phra Prang Khêk*. The construction of the monument seems to have been begun by the Cambodians and finished by the Thai; the towers are quite well preserved. Of two smaller, square-formed buildings lying in front, *i. e.*, east and S. E. of the towers, the last one is in the best condition having only lost its roof.

Continuing towards the west we reach *Phaulkon's house* or palace consisting of 5 buildings constructed in a curious style, all rather narrow and with windows the form of which reminds one of the Saracenic style. Here resided the mighty minister with his Japanese wife and here he no doubt entertained the French noblemen, officers and also priests. One of the buildings farthest west was in fact a chapel.

From Phaulkon's palace we turn to the left to reach the citadel and King Narai's palace, but before entering the citadel let us turn to the right and stop just for a moment to visit:

Wat Sao Tong Thong where a peculiar octagonal Prachedi attracts one's attention. In its whitewashed niches are seen golden figures of standing, walking or sitting Buddhas, which though undoubtedly of recent origin are still worth looking at. The Vihan dates, in its original form, from the time of the foundation of Ayudhyā (A. D. 1350).

At the outskirts of the temple grounds lie two buildings, one called Tūk Pichu the other Tūk Khochasarn. According to the views of Prince Damrong the first named stands for the French word *bijou*, *i. e.*, small, while the other is derived from Khorassan a Persian province, these buildings being occupied respectively by some French residents and the Persian ambassador to the court of Phra Narai.

The citadel is surrounded by brick walls built in an oblong square and divided into three courtyards; there are eight gates, two on each face. Each of the four corners of the citadel is built like a bastion and there are still traces of openings for the guns placed behind the walls. We enter the citadel by the N. E. gate, inside which is the house of the Governor; we are now in the first and lowest courtyard. Just opposite the Governor's house, *i. e.*, south, are the ruins of several two-storied houses, which served as magazines for the King. They are appropriately called "Phra Klang," one of the buildings being of more than ordinary interest by reason of the immense thickness of its walls and the remains of pipes debouching from the brickwork. This is the famous water reservoir, where the water led through under-ground pipes from Tale Chubsorn about four kilometres N. E. of the town, was stored and from here directed to the fountains and the bathing basins reserved for King Narai. A road between the Governor's house and the "Klang" leads through a tall gate up and into the inner courtyard on both sides of which were built stables for elephants. We do not, however, enter by this gate but turn to the left, still keeping inside the outer courtyard where we examine the ruins

of the houses destined for the King's guests, also dungeons and fountains, whereafter we enter the second courtyard through a gate in the southern part of the outer courtyard and see here the few remains left of King Narai's personal apartment called Phra Thi Nang Sutthaisawan. From this court-yard we walk up the curious sloping approach to a gate leading into the third and upper courtyard. We have at once on our left hand the ruins of the audience hall called Phra Thinang Thanya Maha Prasat, a tall ugly building now without a roof; the interior is not big. At the end of the hall is seen the window behind which the royal throne was placed and in which the King appeared when he received ambassadors in audience. According to Gervaise the walls of the halls were covered with large fine mirrors brought out from France and the building itself was covered with a pyramidal roof probably something like that of Dusit Maha Prasat in the Bangkok palace. To the left of the audience hall are still two buildings more; namely, the offices of the changvad and a wat-like one called *Chandrabhisin*, built by King Mongkut, where a Museum has been recently installed. Behind these buildings were and are still to-day two long rows of building where in King Narai's time, his harem stayed. Standing in front of the government offices one sees a gate in the northern wall. This is *Pratu Vichayen*, and here was Phaulkon arrested by Phra Petracha's soldiers, later on to be led out into the forest at Tale Chubsorn and killed there. A lot of small niches will be observed in the gate buildings and in other places too; these were, according to Gervaise, ornamented with china vases on big days and—I believe—also used for placing lamps when illuminating the palace. The fortifications were no doubt constructed by a French military engineer, who probably also built the palaces and other buildings, which all look rather uncomfortably narrow and dark, besides being very ugly.

The town is surrounded on three sides by high earthen walls and broad moats. Besides this there is an interior moat, which probably represents the old Cambodian town boundary.

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